

Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 CIAE-00 CU-05 INR-11 NSAE-00 RSC-01 USIA-15

EUR-25 ISO-00 AF-10 DRC-01 /083 W

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FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2932

INFO USMISSION USUN

AMEMBASSY ACCRA

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

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NESCO

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: AORG, OCON, KE, UNESCO

SUBJECT: INVITATION OF KENYA TO HOST UNESCO 19TH
GENERAL CONFERENCE

REF: STATE 215627

SUMMARY

1. VOTE ON RESOLUTION RE KENYA OFFER HOST 19TH GEN.
CONF. PUT OFF TO OCTOBER 10 IN ORDER PREPARE DRAFT D.R.
HOWEVER, VOTE WILL LIKELY BE BY ACCLAMATION IN FAVOR OF
ACCEPTING INVITATION. RESOLUTION REPORTEDLY WILL BE TO
EFFECT THAT ANY COST OVER AND ABOVE REGULAR BUDGET WILL
BE BORNE BY GOV. KEN/YA AND VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS.

2. IN LENGTHY DEBATE ON INVITATION 35 SPEAKERS PARTI-
CIPATED. EACH AFRICAN MEMBER OF EX.BD. SPOKE IN STRONG
TERMS SUPPORTING KENYAN INITIATIVE AND STATING IM-
PORTANCE THEY ATTACHED TO ACCEPTING THE INVITATION.

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POINT WAS MADE THAT UNESCO RULES OF PROCEDURE ENCOURAGE

HOLDING MEETINGS IN DIFFERENT PARTS OF WORLD AND THAT SO FAR FIVE GENERAL CONFERENCES HAVE BEEN HELD OUTSIDE PARIS. THESE WERE IN MEXICO, LEBANON, ITALY, URUGUAY AND INDIA. AFRICA BEING THE ONLY REGION WHICH HAS NOT HOSTED A UNESCO GEN. CONF.

3. AFRICANS WERE STRONGLY SUPPORTED BY BOARD MEMBERS FROM LATIN AMERICA AND ASIA. THEY ALL SPOKE WITH SOME FERVOR ON NEED TO APPRECIATE DIFFERENT CULTURES AND BROADENING EXPERIENCE THAT WOULD RESULT FROM HOLDING GEN. CONF. IN AFRICA. PARTICULARLY STRONG STATEMENTS WERE MADE BY EX.BD. MEMBERS FROM MEXICO, COLUMBIA, URUGUAY AND CHILE. OF THE ASIANS, JAPANESE, INDIA AND PAKISTAN EACH SPOKE IN FAVOR OF KENYA HOSTING THE CONFERENCE AND EXPRESSED GREAT APPRECIATION FOR THE INVITATION. CHINA OFFERED A LONG INTERVENTION IN STRONG SUPPORT
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OF KENYAN INITIATIVE AND IMPLYING THAT ANY OPPOSITION TO HOLDING THE CONFERENCE ON AFRICAN SOIL WOULD BE EVIDENCE OF RACISM.

4. SOVIET BLOC AND YUGOSLAVIA ALSO SPOKE IN STRONG TERMS SUPPORTING KENYA INVITATION. SOVIET EX.BD. MEMBER DELIVERED LONG DISCOURSE IN FAVOR OF KENYA HOSTING CONFERENCE AND DOWN PLAYING ANY FINANCIAL PROBLEMS. HE WAS SUPPORTED BY BULGARIA, WHICH JUST HOSTED RECENT EX.BD. MEETING. YUGOSLAVIA ALSO MADE A STRONG STATEMENT SUPPORTING MOVE.

5. OF WESTERN EUROPEANS, SPAIN STRONGLY SUPPORTED MOVE AND ASKED THAT AN IMMEDIATE VOTE BY ACCLAMATION BE TAKEN ACCEPTING THE INVITATION. ITALY ALSO STRONGLY SUPPORTED THE INVITATION AND MADE A LONG INTERVENTION. FRANCE SUPPORTED THE INVITATION BUT RAISED THE QUESTION OF FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS. THE UK AND FRG DELEGATES ALSO SUPPORTED AND THANKED KENYA FOR THE INVITATION, BUT ASKED FOR FURTHER FINANCIAL DETAILS. CANADA TOOK A SIMILAR LINE. NETHERLANDS MADE AN INTERVENTION

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SUPPORTING THE INVITATION AND ALSO ASKED FOR SOME FURTHER FINANCIAL INFORMATION.

6. THE ARAB DELEGATES MADE INTERVENTIONS IN SUPPORT OF THE INVITATION AND SUPPORTED A VOTE BY ACCLAMATION.

7. AS NEXT TO LAST SPEAKER, PERMREP INTERVENED ALONG LINES INDICATED IN INSTRUCTIONS, BUT WITHOUT INDICATING PRECISELY HOW US WOULD VOTE. AFTER JOINING IN PRAISE OF KENYAN INITIATIVE AND COMMENTING ON BEAUTIES OF NAIROBI AND RICHNESS OF KENYAN HISTORY, PERMREP IN LOW KEY ASKED THAT NO VOTE BE TAKEN UNTIL FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS COULD BE SPELLED OUT IN THE FORM OF A WRITTEN RESOLUTION WHICH WOULD THEN BE SENT TO GEN.CONF. FOR ACTION.

8. SECRETARIATE THEN GAVE FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS WHICH WOULD RUN TO 1 1/2 MILLION IN ADDED COST. KENYAN REP. REITERATED HIS COUNTRIES WILLINGNESS TO ASSUME SOME OF THE ADDITIONAL COST. BUT HE WOULD NOT COMMIT HIS GOVERN-

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MENT TO ASSUME ALL. THE SECRETARIATE THEN INDICATED COST WOULD BE REDUCED SUBSTANTIALLY IF GOV. OF KENYA

WOULD PICK UP COST OF TRAVEL AND HOUSING OF SECRETARIATE.

9. ALTHOUGH A PROPOSAL WAS THEN MADE TO VOTE BY ACCLAMATION, CHAIRMAN ETAMDI, AFGANISTAN, RULED THAT BEST TO AWAIT WRITTEN DRAFT DR AND FINAL ACTION PUT OFF TO OCTOBER 10.

10. COMMENT: FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS DID NOT PLAY AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN THE DEBATE OR IN THE INTENT TO VOTE BY MEMBERS OF THE BOARD. THE ISSUE IS CLEARLY CONSIDERED TO BE OF THE UTMOST IMPORTANCE BY ALL AFRICAN DELEGATES. HOSTING THE 19TH GEN.CONF. IS A MATTER OF PRIDE AND PRESTIGE TO THEM. THE COST TO DELEGATIONS TO ATTEND, AS WAS POINTED OUT. WILL BE LESS FOR THE MAJORITY OF STATES THAN IF THE CONFERENCE WERE HELD IN PARIS. THIS IS PARTICULARLY TRUE OF THE POOREST NATIONS, MANY OF WHOM ARE IN AFRICA. IT IS FURTHER CLEAR THAT WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THE US NO OTHER DELEGATION IS PREPARED TO VOTE AGAINST OR EVEN ABSTAIN ON A RESOLUTION. THE SOVIETS CLEARLY SEE THIS AS A POLITICAL OPPORTUNITY AND ARE PLAYING DOWN THE FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS. THE CHINESE ARE ALSO USING THIS ISSUE TO SHOW SUPPORT FOR THE AFRICAN STATES. THE ARGUMENT THAT CONFERENCES SHOULD BE HELD AT HEADQUARTERS IS DIFFICULT TO SUSTAIN BECAUSE THE UNESCO GENERAL CONFERENCES HAVE BEEN HELD IN VARIOUS PARTS OF THE WORLD AND AFRICA IS THE ONLY REGION WHICH HAS NOT HOSTED A CONFERENCE. AN ABSTENTION AFTER A VOTE BY ACCLAMATION WOULD STAND OUT AND PLACE THE US AS THE ONLY NATION NOT WILLING TO SUPPORT THE AFRICAN REQUEST. THE 19TH GEN.CONF. WILL BE THE FIRST GEN. CONF. PRESIDED OVER BY AN AFRICAN DG. AS THIS IS AN EMOTIONAL, POLITICAL ISSUE BUDGETARY ARGUMENTS SOUND HOLLOW. NOTEWORTHY THAT MODERATE AFRICANS, I.E. EX.BD. MEMBERS FROM GHANA AND ETHIOPIA WERE PARTICULARLY STRONG IN URGING UNANIMOUS SUPPORT FOR KENYA INITIATIVE. ZAMBIAN EX.BD. MEMBER ALSO MADE AN EMOTIONAL APPEAL FOR ACCEPTANCE OF THE INVITATION. IN VIEW FACT AFRICANS SEEM ATTACH SUCH HIGH POLITICAL IMPORTANCE THIS ISSUE AND THAT SOVIET BLOC IS STRONGLY SUPPORTING FULL LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ACCEPTANCE INVITATION REGARDLESS FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS WILL PLACE US IN DIFFICULT POSITION OF BEING ALONE IN AN ABSTENTION. IF VOTE IS BY ACCLAMATION US DEL. WOULD HAVE TO INTERVENE AND STATE THAT THE US IS TO BE NOTED ON THE RECORD AS NOT PARTICIPATING IN THE VOTE BY ACCLAMATION AND THAT HAD A VOTE BEEN TAKEN THE US WOULD WANT THE RECORD TO SHOW AN ABSTENTION. SUCH ACT WOULD FOCUS ATTENTION ON US AND WOULD SURELY BE INTERPRETED BY AFRICANS AND OTHER LDC'S AS LACK OF SENSI-

TIVITY ISSUE THEY FEEL OF UTMOST IMPORTANCE AND EVIDENCE
OF UNWILLINGNESS US ACCORD PROPER RESPECT AND STATUS
INVITATION FROM AFRICAN GOVERNMENT. THIS WOULD STAND
OUT AS US VOTED ACCEPT INVITATIONS FROM SPAIN TO HOLD
1972 EX.BD. IN MADRID AND FROM BULGARIA HOLD 1974 EX.BD.
IN VARNA. ALSO NOTE BRAZIL HAS INDICATED THEY WILL
INVITE EX.BD. IN 1976. THEREFORE. PERMDEL URGES DEPT.
PERMIT YES VOTE IN INVITATION FROM GOV. KENYA.
IRWIN

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